



<b>POLICY TITLE: Flexible Funds</b>		<b>PAGE 1 OF 9</b>
<b>CHAPTER: General Administrative Policies</b>		
	<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b>  <b>Approved by:</b> _____ Signature of Agency Director	<b>PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>LATEST REVISION:</b> June 19, 2006	<b>REVIEW BY LEGAL COUNSEL:</b> 06/19/06

<b>I. AUTHORITY</b>	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, provisions in Titles 4 and 16 of the D.C. Code and the Modified Final Order and Implementation Plan in LaShawn A. v. Williams.
<b>II. APPLICABILITY</b>	All CFSA employees, contracted personnel, and contracted agency personnel.
<b>III. RATIONALE</b>	<p>The purpose of the Flexible Funds Policy is to specify how the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) allows for flexibility in providing services or supports to promote the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families in the District of Columbia. CFSA seeks to address the specific needs of children and families through individualized services or supports. With easily accessible flexible funds, social workers are able to provide, purchase, or arrange for timely individualized services identified in a child and/or family case plan to meet the needs of a child and/or family.</p> <p>Children and families involved with CFSA sometimes have needs that may not be anticipated by CFSA, contracted agency, District and federal government, and community programs and are not generally covered by foster care board rates. Therefore, CFSA aims to fill in the gaps in services through using flexible funds to provide timely support to children and families. When essential services or supports cannot be provided in the time frame needed through other CFSA, contracted agency, government, or community programs or foster care board rates, flexible funds should be accessible.</p> <p>Flexible funds shall be used to support children's safety, permanence, and well being. Flexible funds may be used to prevent removal and allow children to remain safely in their homes, to support the achievement of the permanency goal, to prevent placement disruptions, or to support children's well being, regardless of whether the children remain with their parents or with pre/licensed kinship caregivers. Through timely access to flexible funding, CFSA is supporting practice change by encouraging social workers to identify and provide the services or supports that address children's and family's needs.</p>

<b>IV. POLICY</b>	It is the policy of the Child and Family Services Agency to make available flexible funds to be used for timely individualized services or supports that promote children's safety, permanence, and well-being. When other CFSA, contracted agency, government and community programs or foster care board rates cannot be accessed in the timeframe that the service or support is needed, social workers may access flexible funds in accordance with the criteria and process as delineated herein.
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<b>VI. ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>A.</b> Flexible Funds Application <b>B.</b> Security Deposit Statement of Agreement and Understanding
<b>VII. PROCEDURES</b>	<p><b>Procedure A: Eligibility</b></p> <p>Children, their caregivers, and others who seek to provide safe, permanent families for children are eligible to receive services or supports through the use of flexible funds. Flexible funds are used to promote children's safety, permanence, and well-being.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children shall be eligible for services or supports using flexible funds to prevent the opening of a case or for open cases, whether children remain in their homes or are in placement.</li> <li>2. Parents shall be eligible for services or supports using flexible funds to prevent removal as well as to facilitate achieving a child's goal of reunification.</li> <li>3. Licensed kinship caregivers shall be eligible for services or supports using flexible funds to support children's safety, permanence, and well being.</li> <li>4. Kin wanting to care for children and needing services or supports to become licensed kinship caregivers or to maintain licensure shall be eligible for services or supports using flexible funds to help them to become or continue to be placement and permanency resources.</li> </ol> <p><i>(Note: For all other children and families involved with CFSA, direct service funding is available for needed services and supports.)</i></p>

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## **Procedure B: Criteria for the Use of Funds**

Children and families involved with CFSA have many needs, but flexible funds are limited. Therefore, specific criteria for when flexible funds may be used are important for making effective use of funds appropriated for this purpose.

1. Flexible funds may be used when all of the following criteria are met:
  - a. Providing the requested service or support is intended to promote a child's safety, permanence, and/or well being;
  - b. The requested service or support could not be provided through other CFSA, contracted agency, government, or community programs or foster care board rates in the timeframe the service or support is required. For instance, Housing Choice vouchers through the Family Unification Program may be available through the Housing Specialist. Clothing may be available from the Office of Volunteer Services. Clothing, furniture, and grocery vouchers may also be available. Health services, in addition to tutoring and mentoring services, are provided through the Office of Clinical Practice. Many services for youth are provided through the Center of Keys for Life in the Office of Youth Development;
  - c. A need for the service or support has been identified, is connected to the case plan, and the recipient agrees to the goals of the case plan.
2. For services or supports to kin seeking to become placement and permanency resources, the kinship caregiver and all adults in the home have obtained child protection and NCIC clearances, and the home has been assessed as an appropriate placement.
3. For services or supports to licensed kinship caregivers and kin seeking to become placement and permanency resources;
  - a. the kinship caregivers have agreed to cooperate fully in completing the licensing process consistent with DC regulations and to remain a licensed provider so long as the child(ren) are in their care; and
  - b. the kinship caregivers agree that any service or support purchased with these funds, other than permanent fixtures, shall remain with the child if the child's placement changes.
4. Flexible funds may be used to facilitate reunification when the parent(s) agree to the goals of the case plan.
5. Flexible funds may be used for housing assistance and large purchases, such as furniture or equipment for disabled children, when the service or support is intended to facilitate reunification, adoption, permanent guardianship, or placement with kin.
6. If the Court orders services or supports for which flexible funds are required and the social worker believes that the order does not meet the criteria in this Procedure, the social worker shall raise the issue to his or her supervisor and to the appropriate CFSA/Office of the Attorney General legal staff.

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	<p><b>Procedure C: Categories of Services and Supports</b></p> <p>Flexible funds shall provide for individualized services or supports to help children, their caregivers, and others who seek to become safe, permanent families for children.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Any service or support crafted to address individual needs that meets the criteria specified in Procedure B of this policy is eligible for flexible funds.</li><li>Flexible funds may be used for services or supports such as the following, for example:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Housing assistance in the form of rental assistance (for no more than three months) or security deposits (one time only);</li><li>Utility assistance;</li><li>Home or car adaptations, or equipment to care for disabled children;</li><li>Home repair or maintenance;</li><li>Lead abatement;</li><li>Transportation;</li><li>Child care;</li><li>Job training and support;</li><li>Educational assistance;</li><li>Intensive home-based services;</li><li>Furniture;</li><li>Food assistance;</li><li>Clothing for children; and</li><li>Activities for children and youth such as lessons or camp.</li></ol></li></ol>	
	<p><b>Procedure D: Limitations on the Use of Funds</b></p> <p>Because flexible funds are limited by appropriations, requests shall be subject to limitations in time frame, dollar value, and usage to preserve funds for when they are most needed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Flexible funds are limited to the extent they are appropriated by law.</li><li>When flexible funds are being used, the social worker shall work with the family and the family team, to determine the extent to which the family can contribute to purchasing the service.</li><li>Except for good cause as approved by the Deputy Director for Programs, purchases of furniture or other property, as well as rental, security deposit, and utility assistance, may only be funded once per category of need per fiscal year per family using flexible funds.</li><li>Flexible funds generally may be used for ongoing services or supports and activities only up to six months. Services, supports, or activities may be reauthorized if they are to continue for longer than a six-month period and flexible funds are requested to be used. The reauthorization decision shall be determined based on the criteria in Procedures A and B of this policy.</li></ol>	
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### **Procedure E: Requests for the Use of Funds**

Social workers shall submit requests for flexible funds with supporting documentation to their immediate supervisor, as soon as the need is known to the social worker.

1. The social worker shall document the following information when requesting flexible funds on the attached form (see Attachment A):
  - a. The name of the parent, licensed kinship caregiver, or unlicensed kin, as well as the FACES identification number;
  - b. The name and age of the child/children for whom the service or support is requested and the names and ages of the other children that reside in the home;
  - c. An explanation of what other CFSA, contracted agency, government, or community programs have been explored for the service or support and why the service or support can not be provided through these programs (e.g., the service or support is not available in the time frame needed); and
  - d. The name, address and telephone number of the payee (person/entity to whom the payment is directed).
2. The social worker shall provide the following to explain why the requested service or support is needed:
  - a. If a Family Team Meeting (FTM) has been held, a signed statement from a FTM facilitator that the service or support requested is part of the plan resulting from the FTM; or
  - b. A description of the following:
    - i. How the requested service or support is intended to promote the child's safety, permanence, and/or well being; and,
    - ii. Whether there is a commitment to participate in the service or support once implemented (e.g., a parent agrees that he/she needs parenting support and makes him/herself available to participate).
3. The social worker shall include supporting documentation with the request, as listed below. In emergency situations (service or support required within 24 to 48 hours), the supervisor or manager approving the request (*see Procedures F, G, H and J of this policy*) may waive the requirement for documentation at the time of the request, but the documentation shall be required within 24 hours or one (1) business day:
  - a. Price estimates (for purchases over \$1000, a minimum of two written estimates are required) or a copy of the bill for which flexible funds are being requested to cover;
  - b. For security deposit requests, a security deposit statement signed by the landlord stating that any remaining funds after the family vacates the premises shall be returned to CFSA. *See Attachment B*; and

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	<p>c. For services or supports to kin seeking to become placement and permanency resources, child protection and NCIC clearances for the kinship caregiver and all adults in the home, as well as the home assessment.</p> <p>d. Any other relevant documents (e.g., court orders).</p>
	<p><b>Procedure F: Purchase Card Requests</b></p> <p>Requests from social workers at CFSA are subject to an approval process before flexible funds can be used. This approval process is designed to ensure the appropriate use of funds, as well as timely access.</p> <p>The District of Columbia's Purchase Card program is designed to provide District employees a purchasing tool enabling them "to perform their respective programmatic functions of government in an efficient, timely, and cost-effective manner." Purchase cards (credit cards) may be used for flexible fund expenditures. Purchase cards have been issued only to the following CFSA personnel: the Director, Deputy Directors and Program Administrators (or their designees).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social workers shall submit requests for flexible funds with supporting documentation to their immediate supervisor. In emergency situations, the supervisor or manager approving the request may waive the requirement for documentation at the time of the request, but the documentation shall be required the next business day. <i>See also Procedure E: Requests for the Use of Funds, Procedure G: Gift Card Requests and Procedure H: General Flex Fund Requests.</i></li> <li>2. Supervisors must approve or disapprove of the request immediately, and notify the social worker of the decision.</li> <li>3. Supervisors shall immediately submit the approved request to the authorized card holders (or their designees). Card holders only are authorized to contact the vendor (by telephone, over the internet, or in person) to order and purchase the requested services or supports.</li> <li>4. Purchase cards may not be used for: Metro fare cards, cash advances or ATM withdrawal.</li> <li>5. For requests that are not of an urgent nature, social workers may follow Procedure H.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure G: Gift Card Requests</b></p> <p>Gift cards may be used for flexible fund expenditures only in an emergency situation (urgently needed within 24 to 48 hours). Gift cards have been issued to managers with the authority to approve the requests: supervisory social workers, program managers, program administrators and the Deputy Director for Programs. Gift cards are from limited vendors. Social workers should check with their supervisor to assure the correct vendor card is available.</p>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social workers shall submit requests for flexible funds with supporting documentation to their immediate supervisor. In emergency situations, the supervisor or manager approving the request <i>may</i> waive the requirement for documentation at the time of the request, but the documentation shall be required the next business day. <i>See also Procedure E: Requests for the Use of Funds, Procedure F: Purchase Card Requests and Procedure H: General Flex Fund Requests.</i></li> <li>2. Supervisors must approve or disapprove of the request immediately, and notify the social worker of the decision.</li> <li>3. The authorizing manager determines if the request is within the limit remaining on the gift card. (If not, Procedures F or H are followed.) The manager gives the card to the social worker for the purchase of services or supports.</li> <li>4. The social worker purchases the services or supports.</li> <li>5. The social worker returns the gift card, with a receipt of the purchase, to the authorizing manager within 24 hours.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure H: General Flex Fund Requests</b></p> <p>When requests are not of an immediate or emergency nature, social workers may use the following approval process to request flexible funds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social workers shall document their requests that services or supports be purchased with flexible funds (<i>see Procedure E of this policy</i>) and submit requests for approval to their supervisors who shall submit the requests directly to managers with the authority to approve the requests when more than supervisory approval is needed. (see #2 of this Procedure).</li> <li>2. The level of approval required is determined by the amount requested: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Supervisory social workers are authorized to approve up to \$1,000 per case.</li> <li>b. Supervisory social workers are authorized to approve up to \$2,500 per case when services or supports are requested through the FTM process;</li> <li>c. Program managers are authorized to approve up to \$5,000 per case;</li> <li>d. Program administrators are authorized to approve up to \$10,000 per case; and</li> <li>e. The Deputy Director for Programs is authorized to approve over \$10,000 per case.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Supervisors and managers shall ensure that social workers' requests include all of the necessary information specified in Procedure E of this policy before approving requests. <b>Managers shall ensure adequate funds are available before approval.</b></li> </ol>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Requests for the use of flexible funds shall be submitted immediately to the management level of authorization required (see H2. above). The authorized manager shall approve or deny the request and notify the social worker of the disposition of the request within one (1) business day of the request being made.</li> <li>5. After review and approval, the authorized manager shall immediately forward the request along with the supporting documentation and a request for payment to Fiscal Operations.</li> <li>6. All requests for flexible funds shall be submitted to Fiscal Operations who will process the check request and have the check ready for payment within five (5) business days. Any questions from the Fiscal Operations staff regarding the request for payment should be referred to the Deputy Director for Programs within 24 hours or one (1) business day.</li> <li>7. Payments shall be made to the vendor unless payment to the caregiver or parent is specifically approved by the supervisor or manager approving the request.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure I: Review of Services and Supports</b></p> <p>To ensure that funds are being used appropriately, the use of services or supports shall be reviewed by supervisory social workers frequently. If services or supports are no longer needed, they shall be cancelled.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supervisory social workers shall review cases every 30 days and make recommendations regarding the services or supports provided with flexible funds.</li> <li>2. If ongoing services or supports are no longer required, the worker with supervisor concurrence will submit cancellation notices to Fiscal Operations.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure J: Contracted Agency Process</b></p> <p>Requirements for accessing flexible funds are slightly different for contracted agencies than for CFSA. Requests from social workers in contracted agencies with case management responsibility are also subject to an approval process before they can be submitted to CFSA.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Like CFSA social workers, contracted agency social workers shall follow Procedures A – E and Procedure I when requesting services or supports to be provided with flexible funds.</li> <li>2. The program director shall submit the request for CFSA flexible funds to the CFSA program monitor. The program director's request shall be on letterhead, including the original request with supporting documentation and a certification from the contracted agency that the contract does not include provisions for the contracted agency to provide the requested service.</li> </ol>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The program monitor shall review and determine, within 24 hours or one business day, that the contract does not already require the contracted agency to provide this service.</li> <li>4. If the program monitor makes such a determination, he or she shall submit requests to his or her supervisor and follow Procedure F: Purchase Card Requests or Procedure G: Gift Card Requests.</li> <li>5. When the request is not of an immediate or emergency nature, the agency social worker shall submit the requests to his or her supervisor who shall submit the requests directly to managers with the authority to approve the requests. The level of approval required differs by the amount requested: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Supervisory program monitors are authorized to approve up to \$1,000 per case.</li> <li>b. Supervisory program monitors are authorized to approve up to \$2,500 per case when services or supports are requested through the Family Team Meeting process;</li> <li>c. Program managers are authorized to approve up to \$5,000 per case;</li> <li>d. The Administrator for the Office of Licensing and Monitoring is authorized to approve up to \$10,000 per case; and</li> <li>e. The Deputy Director for Programs is authorized to approve over \$10,000 per case.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Requests for the use of flexible funds shall be submitted immediately to the management level of authorization required (see J5. above). The authorized manager shall approve or deny the request and notify CFSA program monitor of the disposition of the request within one business day of the request being made.</li> <li>5. After submitting a request to the program monitor, the contracted agency program director shall receive notice of an approval or denial within three business days. After review and approval of the request, the authorized manager shall request payment and send the supporting documentation to Fiscal Operations.</li> <li>6. Fiscal Operations shall process authorized payment and have the check ready for payment within five (5) business days. Inquiries from Fiscal Operations shall be referred to the Administrator for the Office of Licensing and Monitoring within twenty-four (24) hours or one business day.</li> <li>7. Payments for approved services or supports may be made to the service provider directly or to the contracted agency, as determined on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ol>
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## FLEX FUNDS – PURCHASE AUTHORIZATION/VOUCHER

1. VENDOR NAME AND ADDRESS		5. CASE NAME	6. DATE OF REQUEST
		7. CASE NUMBER	8. COST NOT TO EXCEED \$
		9. SOCIAL WORKER NAME	10. SOCIAL WORKER TELEPHONE
		11. SOCIAL WORKER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____	
2. VENDOR TELEPHONE	3. FED ID # / SOC SEC #	12. SUPERVISORY APPROVAL <i>(case files reviewed)</i> _____ DATE _____	
4. AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS  DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY 400 6 <sup>TH</sup> STREET, S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20024		13. DIRECTOR/DESIGNEE APPROVAL _____ DATE _____	
		14. CONTRACTS _____ DATE _____	
		15. FISCAL OPERATIONS _____ DATE _____	
		16. VENDOR SIGNATURE <i>(certifies delivery of items below)</i> _____ DATE _____	
		17. CLIENT SIGNATURE <i>(certifies receipt of items below)</i> _____ DATE _____	
18. TYPE OF PURCHASE/ITEMS REQUESTED <input type="checkbox"/> SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> SUPPLIES <input type="checkbox"/> GOODS			

### VENDOR PLEASE NOTE:

Purchases are not subject to DC. Sales tax. Use Tax Exempt #

TOTAL ACTUAL COST\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(sales receipt included)*

19. FLEX FUNDS CHARGED TO: BUDGET CODE			20. METHOD OF AWARD <input type="checkbox"/> COMPETITIVE BID <input type="checkbox"/> 3 BIDS <input type="checkbox"/> PRE-AWARD VENDOR <input type="checkbox"/> SOLE SOURCE
PROGRAM NAME	PROGRAM / PROJECT CODE	OBJECT / SUB. OBJ.	
21. OTHER BIDDERS (include name, address, telephone, bid amt.)			
22. PAYMENT METHOD <input type="checkbox"/> PURCHASE/CREDIT CARD <input type="checkbox"/> CHECK: TO VENDOR <input type="checkbox"/> GIFT CARD <input type="checkbox"/> CHECK: TO FAMILY OR KINSHIP CAREGIVER			
23. JUSTIFICATION <i>(Explain clearly and concisely the need for purchase. Attach all pertinent documentation. See Flexible Funds policy.)</i>			

FILE COPY

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Child and Family Services Agency



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
400 6<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
202-442-6000

**Security Deposit Statement  
of  
Agreement and Understanding**

I, (We) the undersigned Lessor do hereby agree and understand that all monies paid as Security Deposit of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_, on behalf of the Occupant(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are the sole funds of the Child and Family Services Agency (herein after CFSA). I, (we) further agree  
and understand that should all or any portion of said Security Deposit become refundable, all such monies  
are to be refunded to CFSA and **NOT TO SAID OCCUPANT(S)**.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lessor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
CFSA Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date